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Fairfax County  
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Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
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TESTIMONY OF  
**MIKE KNAPP**  
CHAIRMAN, TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

House Bill 981  
Transportation Funding - Mass Transit - Sales and Use Tax  
House Bill 1392  
Transportation Funding - Mass Transit - Sales and Use Tax  
House Bill 1345  
Transportation Funding - Mass Transit – Funding

March 7, 2006  
House Ways and Means Committee

Madam Chairman, Members of the Committee, it is an honor to be with you today. My name is Mike Knapp, and I appear before you today as the Chairman of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, which is the federally-mandated body responsible for transportation planning for the entire Greater Washington Metropolitan region – which encompasses Maryland, Virginia and Washington, DC.

One of my goals as Chairman of the TPB – indeed, one of the goals of our entire board -- is to encourage, and to the extent possible help ensure, that our region adequately invests in transportation infrastructure, and especially in mass transit options. In Maryland, we have some work to do to overcome investments in transit that have traditionally lagged behind our overwhelming demand – I know I don't have to tell you that. I am committed to working to find creative ways of making that happen. That's why I am pleased to support the three initiatives presently before your committee.

The bills introduced by Delegates Barkley, Kaiser, and you, Madam Chairman, all propose creative and viable ways of



providing funding directly to mass transit across our state, whether that through tax revenue collected specifically for statewide mass transit – as the Kaiser and Barkley bills propose – or by creating a new mass transit line item within an existing account, as your bill would. These are all worth consideration, and the TPB encourages this committee and the General Assembly to approve legislation that would commit additional resources specifically to mass transit.

The revenue that would be generated and collected by these initiatives can be put to good and immediate use in communities around the state. These additional resources can be used to bolster the transit infrastructure for Metro, and jump-start new, critical projects like the Corridor Cities Transitway in Montgomery and Frederick counties, the Bicounty Transitway for Prince Georges and Montgomery County, and the proposed Red and Green lines in Baltimore. Each of these projects could immediately benefit from the increased investments these bills would provide – but funding could also be used to improve or create new mass transit systems anywhere in the state, from the far reaches of Garrett county to the tip of Worcester. We have communities throughout the state with a variety of transportation needs that haven't been addressed, because they never believed the resources would be available to help them pursue such projects. With these bills, such resources would be available.

I know the Secretary of Transportation has commented in the past that the Administration approaches transportation funding "holistically" – that is, by focusing not on transit or roads but "Transportation" in a broad sense. Frankly, I don't want to lose sight of that approach, because I agree we need to work on improving our entire system, rather than taking a piecemeal approach -- but a holistic approach still requires resources. These bills would create a larger pot of resources to help us meet transportation needs across the state.

In virtually every poll, transportation is identified as a top priority. We need to continue to ensure we have the resources such a priority deserves. I commend you and the other bill sponsors for your leadership in addressing this critical issue, and thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.